



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF THE
PROBATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR

PAUL J. KNIERIM, JUDGE
Probate Court Administrator

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To: Senate Co-Chair Eric D. Coleman
House Co-Chair Gerald M. Fox, III
Senate Ranking Member John A. Kissel
House Ranking Member John W. Hetherington
Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Paul J. Knierim
Probate Court Administrator

Re: RB 951, An Act Concerning the Appointment of a Guardian Ad Litem for a Person who is Subject to a Conservatorship Proceeding or a Proceeding Concerning Administration of Treatment for a Psychiatric Disability

Date: February 28, 2011

The Office of the Probate Court Administrator supports adoption of this bill.

The appointment of a guardian ad litem to represent the interests of a respondent in a conservatorship proceeding has long rested in the discretion of the probate courts. Because the involvement of a guardian ad litem may add to the cost and complexity of the proceeding, courts should make such appointments sparingly. Yet, situations can and do arise in which the appointment is appropriate to assist the judge in reaching a decision. A guardian ad litem can be particularly helpful in determining the best interests of a conserved person when family members are at odds.

To balance these concerns, we have worked with the proponents of this bill to craft language that will provide judges with guidance when deciding whether to appoint a guardian ad litem. The bill would also require judges to specify the purpose of any appointment and would make it clear that the appointment of a guardian ad litem terminates upon completion of the assigned role.